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INTEGRATING THE AMERICAS

George Perry Morris

SEVEN hundred and fifty important citizens from twenty-one republics of the Americas met in Washington for five days in early June. Their host was the Pan-American Union. Their motive in assembling was discussion of the commercial, transport, and banking interests of the two continents as modified by war and post-war conditions. Their spirit was one of deepened fraternity, owing to common deprivations during the great combat, and also owing to similar, if not equal, sources of wealth and power now that the world is free to set about the task of reconstruction.

An observer who moved about among the delegates or who listened to the too many speeches, or who watched the amenities of the social functions that were part of the conference, could not help contrasting the atmosphere of the Washington conference with that of Paris. It would be an exaggeration to say that all the misunderstandings between Americans of the North and Americans of the South have been removed; and the open rebuke of Mexico at this conference by Speaker Gillett of the House of Representatives showed that the United States and its neighbor on the South have yet to attain to a state of entire amity. Nevertheless, it is true that the laity of the countries of the two continents, as well as the diplomats and high officials, are fast coming to see that they must have closer relations as men and as nationals. Hence the plans for education of an increasing number of Latin-Americans in the technical, professional and collegiate schools of the United States. Hence the larger *colonies* of Latin-Americans in the great trading ports and banking centers of the North. Hence also the rapid multiplication of journals that will mediate between the peoples of the republics and bring to them facts, ideas and ideals which they all need to have. Of such periodicals, there are no worthier representatives than the *Hispanic*, *American Historical Review*, *Inter-America*, and the magazine of the Pan-American Union.

It would be difficult to indicate even superficially in an article of this length just how wide a range of topics of an economic and utilitarian sort were touched upon by the distinguished delegates present at this conference. Like most programs arranged by managers of such conferences in the United States it was overcrowded; and many speakers traveled hundreds, if not thousands, of miles to get an all-too-brief hearing. Just appraisal of the conference cannot come until the official record is in hand.

But there were certain outstanding features that can be estimated fairly now. To the eminent bankers from Chili and Bolivia as well as those of the United States who were present, came Mr. Frank A. Vanderlip, formerly president of the National City Bank of New York City, saying that what Europe needs from the Americas, with their wealth of resources, is not more governmental loans or private loans of free capital, but advances in the form of raw materials with which Europe may start up her paralyzed industries. Failing to get help in this

precise form Europe will, in his opinion, dissolve into a chaos of revolution and poverty.

To the exporters and importers of the two continents who were present and who had suffered during the war from curtailment of transportation facilities, came Mr. Hurley, of the United States Shipping Board, and pledged the operation after November 1 of express and subsidiary passenger and freight lines between ports on the east and west coasts of North and South America, bringing New York and Rio De Janeiro within ten days of each other, and once and for all giving to the business men of the republics something like adequate transportation facilities controlled by American capital and operated accordingly.

To the diplomats, business men, and citizens present came the president of the Associated Press and told of the rapidly widening area of territory in Latin-America which is now being served with a full news service from the United States. Add to this fact the simultaneous development of the cabled service given by the United Press to the peoples to the south, and the other fact that within a short time the Western Union Telegraph Company and the Western Telegraph Company of England will begin co-operative construction of a cable connecting the United States and Brazil and other States on the east coast of South America, and it is easy to see that one obstacle to fraternity between the two continents is to be removed, so far as substitution of knowledge for ignorance can do it. Indeed, persons attending the conference had ocular proof of what is being done now. In the lobby of the superb palace of the Pan-American Union, where the conference met, there was a cable office, sending news of the conference each day to Rio de Janeiro, Montevideo, Buenos Aires and nearer points.

The Conference also had laid before it evidence that there is to be early extension of parcel-post mail service between the continents; that steps are to be taken to utilize aviation in connection with this and other forms of intercommunication; that there is to be standardization of laws protecting trade marks, and an attempt at defining uniformity of business ethics. Last, but not least, while the Conference was in session, the President of the United States issued an invitation to the members of the Pan-American Financial Congress to assemble in Washington for a second time, on January 12, 1920.

Argument is hardly necessary to prove that such facts as these are creditable to the American way of doing things. Ties of a very substantial sort are being woven between the Uruguayan and the Louisianian, the Brazilian and the Philadelphian, the Peruvian and the New Yorker. They have long had a nexus in the similarity of their political institutions, at least theoretically considered. They have long had a common pacific attitude toward the rest of the world, and have eschewed militarism. Of late years they have been drawing closer together in the realms of finance, commerce and intercommunication of ideas as to social evolution and international intercourse. In a very real sense they are being integrated, and never as rapidly as now, because forced to it in common defense at a time of world-delinquency.